



EVANGELISATION

Pope Benedict's Homily at Bellahouston Park, Scotland

16 September 2010



About this resource

In his speeches and homilies Pope Benedict XVI left the Church in England and Wales a legacy of reading material for ongoing reflection and prayer. From November 2011 - October 2012 one sheet will be offered monthly to assist deepening our shared appreciation and understanding of what he said.

Home Mission Desk, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales



‘...Christ continues to send his disciples into the world in order to proclaim the coming of his Kingdom and to bring his peace into the world, beginning house by house, family by family, town by town. I have come as a herald of that peace to you, the spiritual children of Saint Andrew and to confirm you in the faith of Peter (cf.Lk 22:32).’

‘The evangelisation of culture is all the more important in our times, when a “dictatorship of relativism” threatens to obscure the unchanging truth about man’s nature, his destiny and his ultimate good.

‘I appeal in particular to you, the lay faithful, in accordance with your baptismal calling and mission, not only to be examples of faith in public, but also to

put the case for the promotion of faith’s wisdom and vision in the public forum. Society today needs clear voices which propose our right to live, not in a jungle of self-destructive and arbitrary freedoms, but in a society which works for the true welfare of its citizens and offers them guidance and protection in the face of their weakness and fragility. Do not be afraid to take up this service to your brothers and sisters, and to the future of your beloved nation.’

Full text: <http://www.thepapalvisit.org.uk/Replay-the-Visit/Speeches/Speeches-16-September/Pope-Benedict-s-Homily-at-Bellahouston-Park>

FOR REFLECTION

Many of us make New Year resolutions to improve our lives in some way. These resolutions are, for some, related to changes in physical appearance, for others they concern work, home or perhaps a relationship. What the words of Pope Benedict spoken at Bellahouston Park remind us is that our primary resolution, the year through, should be to respond ever more generously to the call to evangelise.

Striking in the model of mission that the

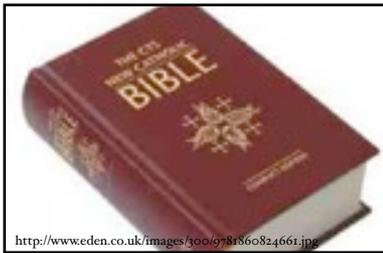
Pope affirms is that it doesn’t necessarily involve big gestures but taking evangelistic steps in our immediate sphere of influence - amongst family, friends and work colleagues.

What one new thing can you do in response to the Pope’s words? How can you make visible and heard the Gospel message? How can you put the case for faith in your life?





GOOD NEWS



Those who sincerely accept the Good News, through the power of this acceptance and of shared faith therefore gather together in Jesus' name in order to seek together the kingdom, build it up and live it. They make up a community which is in its turn evangelising. The command to the Twelve to go out and proclaim the Good News is also valid for all Christians, though in a different way. It is precisely for this reason that Peter calls Christians "a people set apart to sing the praises of God,"[32] those marvelous things that each one was able to hear in his own language.[33] Moreover, the Good News of the kingdom which is coming and which has begun is meant for all people of all times. Those who have received the Good News and who have been gathered by it into the community of salvation can and must communicate and spread it.

The Church knows this. She has a vivid awareness of the fact that the Savior's words, "I must proclaim the Good News of the kingdom of God,"[34] apply in all truth to herself: She willingly adds with St. Paul: "Not that I boast of preaching the gospel, since it is a duty that has been laid on me; I should be punished if I did not preach it"[35] It is with joy and consolation that at the end of the great Assembly of 1974 we heard these illuminating words: "We wish to confirm once

more that the task of evangelising all people constitutes the essential mission of the Church."[36] It is a task and mission which the vast and profound changes of present-day society make all the more urgent. Evangelising is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelise, that is to say, in order to preach and teach, to be the channel of the gift of grace, to reconcile sinners with God, and to perpetuate Christ's sacrifice in the Mass, which is the memorial of His death and glorious resurrection.

Anyone who rereads in the New Testament the origins of the Church, follows her history step by step and watches her live and act, sees that she is linked to evangelisation in her most intimate being:

- The Church is born of the evangelising activity of Jesus and the Twelve. She is the normal, desired, most immediate and most visible fruit of this activity: "Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations."[37] ... Having been born consequently out of being sent, the Church in her turn is sent by Jesus. ... And it is above all His mission and His condition of being an evangeliser that she is called upon to continue.'

Evangelii Nuntiandi 13 - 15
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi_en.html

Pause to re-read this extract and to reflect.

What is evangelisation?

n. from the Greek good news/message, evangelisation is to live, celebrate and share the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Good News that God loves us.



St Ninian

Ninian is the man who first brought the Christian faith to Scotland.



Over the centuries the tomb of St Ninian at Whithorn became one of the great European centres of Christian pilgrimage. More: http://www.stniniansday.co.uk/st_ninian.php

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